

# Job 29:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If I laughed on them, they believed it not; and the light of my countenance they cast not down.

## Analysis

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**If I laughed on them, they believed it not** (אָשַׁחַק אֲלֵהֶם לֹא יָאמִינו, eschak alehem lo ya'aminu)—When Job smiled (sachak, laughed, smiled) on those in distress, they could scarcely trust (aman, believe, have confidence in) such grace. His favor seemed too good to be true for the downcast.

**The light of my countenance they cast not down** (וְאַוְרָ פָּנִים לֹא יַפְּלִלוּן, ve'or panim lo yappilun)—Or panim (light of face) is the biblical idiom for favor and blessing, used of God's face shining upon His people (Numbers 6:25, Psalm 4:6). The verb naphal (cast down, cause to fall) appears in the causative: they did not cause Job's bright countenance to fall. Even in their misery, people couldn't diminish Job's cheerfulness—a striking contrast to Job's current state where his face is darkened (16:16, 30:30).

## Historical Context

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In honor-shame culture, facial expression communicated status and favor. A superior's smile could elevate the inferior, while a frown could devastate. The 'shining face' motif appears throughout Scripture as a sign of blessing and acceptance. Job's ability to maintain a bright countenance despite others' sorrow demonstrated secure confidence in God's favor—the very confidence now shattered by his inexplicable suffering.

## Related Passages

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## James 2:17 — Faith and works

## Study Questions

1. Why would the afflicted find Job's smile 'unbelievable' rather than patronizing or insulting?
2. How does Job's past ability to maintain a 'bright countenance' contrast with his current darkness?
3. When has someone's genuine smile or favor seemed 'too good to be true' in your darkest moment?

## Interlinear Text

וְאֵת	וְאֵת	לְפָנָם	אָשָׁם	קָרְבָּן
If I laughed	H413	H3808	on them they believed	it not and the light
H7832			H539	H216
בְּנֵי	לְאָמֵן	יְפִילָה		
of my countenance	H3808	they cast not down		
H6440		H5307		

## Additional Cross-References

**Psalms 126:1** (Parallel theme): When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

**Psalms 4:6** (Light): There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

**Psalms 89:15** (Light): Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.

**Genesis 45:26** (Faith): And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not.

**Luke 24:41** (Faith): And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

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